



VALLEY VENTURES

A publication of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, keeping you informed about habitat and wildlife conservation in our Valley

Joint Venture Hatches Newsletter

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Valley Ventures*! The idea was incubated for some time, the concepts eventually developed, and this issue finally emerged! We hope you will enjoy this periodic newsletter and find it interesting, informative, thought provoking, and perhaps even entertaining!

Valley Ventures is published by the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture (CVHJV), one of fourteen Joint Ventures implementing habitat enhancement and restoration projects across the continent. These projects contribute to the overall conservation goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan) to conserve wetlands and other habitats critical to the long-term needs of North America's

waterfowl populations. The Plan seeks to restore continental waterfowl populations to levels recorded during the 1970's. Much progress has been made since the Plan's inception in 1986; however, more work must be done if the ultimate goals are to be achieved and maintained. The success of these efforts depends upon continued cooperation of conservation agencies and organizations; increased participation by private landowners; strong support from local, state, and federal legislators; and a heightened public awareness of the intrinsic and economic values of wildlife and its habitat. We hope *Valley Ventures* will:

1. Inform you of the many habitat and wildlife conservation projects



The Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture is continuing its conservation efforts to benefit future generations. Photo: David Rosen

- taking place in our Central Valley;
2. Increase public awareness of and appreciation for wetlands, associated habitats, and wildlife of all types;
 3. Generate support for the efforts of the partners in the CVHJV; and
- see WELCOME: page 2*

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Conservation Lingo In 8 Easy Steps

As you become more involved in wetlands and waterfowl conservation activities, you begin to wonder if people are speaking an entirely different language! For example, someone may say to you, "I just heard from NAWWO that NFWF has matched the dollars of our proposed NAWCA grant and it was approved by the NAWCC and the MBCC to be implemented within the CVHJV, contributing to the goals of the NAWMP and NABCI."

Confused? Well, fear not! Study the following and, in no time, you'll amaze your friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues with your mastery of conservation lingo!

1. **NAWMP (pronounced "nay-womp")** The North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan) is an international agreement signed in 1986 between Canada and the United States in response to prolonged droughts in the 1980's that decimated continental waterfowl populations. The Plan, co-signed by Mexico in 1994, provides a cooperative framework for wetland and waterfowl conservation, focusing on priority areas that are critical to the long-term needs of North American waterfowl. It seeks to restore waterfowl populations continent-wide to the levels recorded during the 1970's.

see LINGO: page 2

WELCOME from front page:

4. Provide ideas and suggestions about how you can become involved in conservation efforts within our region.

California's Central Valley is identified as the single most important waterfowl wintering area along the Pacific Flyway, and it provides critical habitat for a myriad of other species throughout the year. Nowhere else on the continent do so many birds depend upon so little remaining habitat. What habitat remains is becoming more threatened as California's population expands, creating greater demands on

LINGO from front page:

2. **CVHJV (entirely unpronounceable)** The Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, in California's interior, is one of fourteen habitat joint ventures across the continent transforming the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan into on-the-ground action. Joint ventures are regional partnerships between individuals, corporations, conservation organizations, and local, state, provincial, and federal agencies. Habitat joint ventures are located in areas that are critical to waterfowl populations, although their efforts benefit all wetlands-associated wildlife.

3. **NAWCA (pronounced "naw-cuh")** The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (Act) was passed by Congress in 1989 to help support habitat work implemented under the Plan. The Act established a grants program to help fund wetland habitat conservation in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. If you have a project in mind that would acquire a real property interest in, or result in the restoration, management, or enhancement of a wetland ecosystem to benefit wildlife, the Act may be just what the conservation doctor ordered.

4. **NAWCC (pronounced "the Council")** The Act established a North American Wetlands Conservation

our natural resources. The sixteen partners of the CVHJV are striving to enhance, restore, and protect this diverse landscape, where wetlands and wildlife *can* coexist with agriculture and expanding urban populations for the benefit and enrichment of all.

Please contact any of the partners of the CVHJV listed on the back of this newsletter and find out how you can become more involved. By supporting their efforts locally, you can make a significant contribution to continental conservation efforts.



Council to review the merits of wetlands conservation proposals submitted for funding under the Act. Appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, the Council consists of nine members, including the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Executive Director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Council members also include four directors of state fish and wildlife agencies and three individuals representing different non-profit organizations implementing wetlands conservation projects. Except for the Service's Director and the

Valley Ventures is published by the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture, a public-private partnership formed in 1988 to implement the North American Waterfowl Management Plan within the Central Valley of California.

The Joint Venture's conservation efforts encompass wetlands and associated habitats to benefit waterbirds, other wildlife, and you.

For more information about the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture or to get on our mailing list, contact:

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Please contact any of the partners on the back of this newsletter regarding their efforts and how you can support them and become involved.

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Although the primary goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan focus on waterfowl, such as these northern pintail, many other wetland-associated species benefit from the habitat conservation projects implemented by the 14 joint ventures. Photo: David Rosen

Foundation's Executive Director, who have permanent appointments, Council members serve 3-year terms.

5. MBCC (pronounced "Migratory Bird Conservation Commission") The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission was established in 1929 by the passage of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act. It was created and authorized to consider and approve any areas of land or water recommended for purchase or rental by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and also to consider the establishment of new waterfowl refuges. In 1989, the MBCC acquired the responsibility to approve project funding under the Act. The Council submits project recommendations to the Commission for final approval. Since established, the Council has submitted over 500 projects for consideration by the Commission. All have been approved for funding, representing \$244 million for wetland habitat.

6. NFWF (pronounced "nif-wif") Established by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization dedicated to conserving and managing fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats on which they depend. Its goals include species conservation, habitat protection, environmental education, natural resources management, habitat and ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration, and leadership training for conservation professionals. The Foundation awards grants, requir-

ing that each dollar awarded be matched with at least one third-party dollar. Though the Foundation receives Congressionally appropriated funds, none may be used for operating expenses; every penny of these funds must be put into projects. The Foundation depends on private contributions to fund its operations.

7. NAWWO (pronounced "naw-wo") The North American Waterfowl and Wetlands Office, within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is responsible for implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act on an international and national basis.

Let's Go Surfing Now!

Here are some internet addresses you can check out to learn more about the various conservation entities mentioned above.

NAWMP: <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawmphp.html>

CVHJV: http://ceres.ca.gov/wetlands/geo_info/central_valley_habitat.html

NAWCA: <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawcahp.html>

NAWCC: <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawcc.html>

NFWF: <http://www.nfwf.org>

NAWWO: <http://northamerican.fws.gov/index.html>

MBCC: <http://realty.fws.gov/mbcc.html>

NABCI: <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/nabci.html>

8. NABCI (pronounced "nab-see") The North American Bird Conservation Initiative is an international agreement among organizations and agencies in Canada, the United States, and Mexico to focus efforts on the conservation of all bird species in North America. Building on partnerships, such as joint ventures, NABCI will identify bird conservation regions, identify priority bird species for conservation action, and complete bird conservation plans for all bird conservation regions. Current conservation projects target the needs of waterfowl, shorebirds, colonial waterbirds, migratory and resident land birds, and various endangered species.

What's On Your Mind?

We would like to hear from you! Beginning with the next issue of *Valley Ventures*, we will respond to your questions and comments about conservation issues in our Central Valley.

What's the best time to implement a special land management practice? How will some pending legislation affect wetlands in your area? How do you attract a particular species of

wildlife to your property? How are certain conservation decisions made and by whom? These questions and more are fair game for *What's On Your Mind?* Share a conservation success story with others or vent your feelings about an activity in your area that impacts wetlands and wildlife.

Just contact us and we will respond as quickly as possible. We may print

your question or comment (editing out expletives as needed), along with our response, in the subsequent issue of *Valley Ventures*. Write, fax, or email:

What's On Your Mind?

Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture
2800 Cottage Way, W-2610
Sacramento, CA 95825-0509

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Email: wonyourmind@aol.com

Don't Worry... We've Got A Plan!

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan

By 1985, due to habitat loss and drought, waterfowl populations had plummeted to record lows. Historical data indicated that since the first settlers arrived, more than 50 percent of the United States' original 220 million acres of wetland habitat, upon which waterfowl depend for survival, had been destroyed. Across Canada, where a large percentage of waterfowl nest, wetland losses in various areas were estimated at 29 to 71 percent since settlement. In California alone, over 90 percent of its historic 5 million acres of wetlands were lost due to agricultural and urban development, water diversion, and flood control.

By 1985, the Central Valley contained a mere 290,000 acres of remaining wetlands, yet supported the largest concentration of wintering waterfowl (3-4 million birds) in North America

Waterfowl were then, and are now, the most prominent and economically important group of migratory birds on the North American continent. By 1985, approximately 3.2 million people were spending nearly \$1 billion annually to hunt waterfowl. Another 18.6 million people observed, photographed, and otherwise appreciated waterfowl and spent \$2 billion annually for the pleasure of doing it!

Recognizing the importance of waterfowl and wetlands to North Americans and the need for international cooperation to help in the recovery of a shared resource, the Canadian and United States governments developed a strategy to restore waterfowl populations to levels seen in the 1970s through habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement. The strategy was documented in the *North American Waterfowl Management Plan* signed in 1986 by the Canadian Minister of the Environment and the

Did You Know?

The Central Valley, from Red Bluff to Bakersfield, is the single most important waterfowl wintering area in the Pacific Flyway, supporting 60 percent of the total migrating population! In an average year, it will support:

- 100% of the world's population of Aleutian Canada geese (federally threatened species).
- 100% of the world's population of Pacific tule geese (a subspecies of white-fronted geese).
- 80% of North America's Ross' geese and cackling Canada geese.
- Two-thirds of North America's tundra swans and Pacific white-fronted geese.
- 60% of Pacific Flyway northern pintail.
- Hundreds of thousands of migratory shorebirds and songbirds.

United States' Secretary of the Interior, the foundation partnership upon which hundreds of others would be built.

The Plan is innovative because it is international in scope, yet is implemented at a regional level within the areas that are vital to waterfowl survival. The Plan's success depends on partnerships called joint ventures, involving federal, state, provincial, and local governments, businesses, conservation organizations, and individual citizens. Each partner brings a special expertise to the table and together they accomplish what could not be done alone. There are 11 habitat joint ventures in the United States and 3 in Canada. Three species joint ventures also have

been formed to address monitoring and research needs of the black duck, arctic-nesting geese, and sea ducks. Joint ventures are expected to be formed in Mexico in the near future.

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee, established under the Plan, realized that for the Plan to be effective, it would have to be updated regularly to consider changes in the environment, society, and political policy. The Plan was first updated in 1994, with Mexico becoming a signatory. With the most recent update in 1998, the Plan's vision expanded.

In 1986, Plan goals were to protect and restore 6 million acres of wetlands habitat. The 1994 Plan update called for a total of 11.1 million acres of wetlands and associated uplands to be protected and 14.7 million acres to be restored and enhanced. The Plan was updated again in 1998, with new goals seeking the protection of 12.2 million acres of wetland ecosystem habitat and the restoration and enhancement of 15.2 million acres. As in the original Plan document, the goal of restoring continental waterfowl populations to



*Since 1986, joint ventures
have invested over \$1.2
billion to protect, restore, and
enhance over 4.3 million
acres in the United States
alone.*



numbers seen in the 1970's remains the same. Specific habitat goals for each of the Plan's joint ventures are identified in the Plan update.

In recent years, achievements in habitat conservation, changes in agricultural policies and programs, and excellent hydrological conditions have all contributed to a steady increase in waterfowl populations. Although this response is encouraging, it is important to note that the Plan's goals were established for average environmental

conditions rather than for the sustained excellent conditions of the late-90s. Continuing population growth, increasing demand for agricultural production, and below-average hydrological conditions may cause a future decline in waterfowl populations.

If waterfowl populations are to be sustained, conservation efforts must continually be adjusted. The 1998 update presents a vision for the future, carrying the Plan until the next Update in 2003.



For a free copy of the 1998 Update to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, *Expanding the Vision*, call the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture at 916-414-6460.

You also may request a free copy by e-mailing: john_fisher@fws.gov or by writing to:

John Fisher
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Conservation Training
Center, Publications Unit
Route 1, Box 166,
Shepherd Grade Rd.
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Fauna Facts!

The Greater Sandhill Crane

Sandhill crane fossils over six million years old found in Nebraska show that the sandhill crane is the oldest living species of bird. This large, long-legged, long-necked, gray bird can reach a height of five feet and have a wingspan of six-seven feet. The feathers are gray, with a bare red patch on the skin of the forehead. Sandhill cranes are migratory, traveling in large, noisy flocks, their bugling calls reaching far ahead of them. They fly in V-shaped formations,



Photo: David Rosen



Photo: David Rosen

with outstretched necks and legs. Greater sandhill cranes are the largest of six subspecies of sandhill cranes.

Cranes are omnivores, eating a variety of grains and seeds, as well as aquatic invertebrates, insects, small reptiles, amphibians, eggs, and rodents. Cranes like to flock together at night (called roosting) for safety in an open expanse of shallow water.

Greater sandhill cranes perform an elaborate courtship dance by leaping, bowing their heads, flapping their wings, tossing vegetation, and singing gurgling duets. They lay two olive, brown-spotted eggs in a large mounded nest of sticks, grass, and reeds. Both parents incubate the eggs and tend the young. Upon hatching, the downy young develop quickly and

are soon actively following their parents (called precocial). Sandhill cranes are thought to mate for life, and return to the same nesting territory year after year. Cranes can live up to 20 years in the wild.

In California, Greater sandhill cranes nest in wetland habitat in Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, and Siskiyou Counties. Wintering areas include wetlands and irrigated pastures of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Butte, Yolo, Merced, Kern, Sutter, and Stanislaus Counties, and in the Imperial Valley of southern California. There are an estimated 3,400-6,000 Greater sandhill cranes in California.

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), manages Ash Creek Wildlife Area in northeast California to protect breeding habitat for Greater sandhill cranes. Woodbridge Ecological Reserve near Lodi, CA, also managed by CDFG, provides roosting areas for wintering cranes. You may view cranes there from Oct. - Feb. either on your own or on special guided outings. During November, you can celebrate the return of the cranes at the Lodi Crane Festival. Call (916) 358-2353 for info.



NAWCA! NAWCA! ...Who's There?

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA or Act) was enacted by Congress in 1989, in part to support the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan). The Act's purpose is to encourage voluntary, public-private partnerships working to conserve North America's wetland ecosystems. It encourages partnerships by providing funding with two grant programs.

Standard Grants Program: The funding cap for a Standard Grants Program project is \$1 million. Partnerships must match the grant request by at least a 1-to-1 ratio and provide long-term conservation of wetlands and associated uplands through habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement. Projects must also meet certain biological criteria established by the Act. In Mexico, environmental education, training, and management projects also qualify.

Small Grants Program: The Small Grants Program differs from the Standard Grants Program by giving

priority to applicants who have never received an Act grant and/or to a partnership with members who have not previously participated in the Act's grants programs. The funding cap for each grant is \$50,000. The application process is less rigorous than the Standard Grant process, and funding is limited to projects located within the United States. The 1-to-1 funding, biological criteria, and long-term conservation requirements are the same as the Standard Grants Program.

The nine-member North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Council) reviews Grant applications. Appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, the Council members meet three times each year to select the projects that are then recommended to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission for final funding approval. Anyone can apply for a grant at anytime, but certain criteria must be met to have a project funded. Questions considered by the Council regarding a grant application include:

1. How does the project fulfill the purposes of the Act and the Plan?
2. Are there sufficient funds to implement the project and match the Federal contributions?
3. To what extent is a public-private partnership developed?
4. Does the project support conservation of migratory non-game birds and endangered species?
5. What are the recommendations of other partnerships implementing similar projects?



How Does NAWCA Get The \$s?

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act created the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund to support activities conducted under the Act. Several sources of Federal revenue were identified in the Act to fill the Fund's coffers:

1. Sums received under section 6 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 from fines, penalties, and forfeitures of property,
2. Interest accrued on the fund established under section 3 of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman-Robertson Program), and
3. Congressional appropriations.

In 1990, amendments to the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of

1950 (Dingell-Johnson Program) directed that a portion of the money collected from Federal fuel excise taxes on small gasoline engines be allocated for use under the Act for coastal wetlands projects.

In 1998, President Clinton signed into law a bill reauthorizing Federal appropriations to assist in carrying out the Act for Fiscal Years 1999 through 2003. This critical piece of legislation authorizes Congress to continue funding wetlands conservation projects, up to \$30 million each fiscal year. Congress elected to spend only \$14.9 million in Fiscal Year 2000, although, the President has requested \$30 million in appropriations for Fiscal Year 2001.



Did You Know?

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (Pittman-Robertson Program) was enacted to provide financial assistance to states for wildlife restoration activities. The money for this program is derived from an 11-percent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition and a 10% excise tax on hand guns and archery equipment.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers the program and each state must contribute \$1 for every \$3 of Federal Aid money received. This money has been used for wildlife surveys, research, land acquisition, development and maintenance, technical assistance, and hunter education training.

Since the 1930's, hunters and sporting arms enthusiasts in the U.S. have contributed over \$2 billion. This funding has been instrumental in aiding the recovery of popular species such as white-tailed deer, wood ducks, and wild turkeys.

Grant Applicants: Take Notice!

The 2000 Grant Applications Instructions for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act's Standard Grants Program is available from the North American Wetlands Conservation Council Coordinator at email: fw9arw_nawwo@fws.gov. The next deadline for submitting Standard Grant proposals is March 30, 2001.

The Small Grants Program application booklet became available the first week of July.

The deadline for submitting Small Grant proposals is December 1, 2000. For a copy of the Small Grants Program application booklet, contact Keith Morehouse at email: keith_morehouse@fws.gov.



Fourteen-year-old Steven Pate, of Elk Grove, won the 2000 CA Junior Duck Stamp contest with this painting of a drake ring-necked duck. The painting then placed within the top ten in national competition! Way to go Steven!

NAWCA Accomplishments To Date

From 1991 through 1999, the Act funded 675 Standard Grants Program projects in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, involving more than 1,000 partners! The Act supported these projects with a total of \$318.6 million, and the project partners contributed a total of \$729.9 million to these efforts. Approximately 4.4 million acres of wetlands and associated uplands have been acquired, restored, or enhanced in the United States and Canada. In addition, nearly 10 million acres have been affected in large biosphere reserves through conservation education and management plan projects in Mexico.

Since the Small Grants Program was initiated in 1996, the Act has used it to fund 77 projects with \$2.7 million. Three hundred twenty-five partners have contributed a total of \$23.7 million to the projects, affecting 27,118 acres.

To request a copy of the *North American Wetlands Conservation Act Progress Report, 1996-1997*, e-mail John Fisher at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Publication Unit: john_fisher@fws.gov. The report features five projects funded by the Act, gives a state-by-state accounting of approved projects with funding and acreage figures, describes migratory

Did You Know?

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, sponsored by Congressman John Dingell and Senator Edwin Johnson, was enacted in 1950, having been modeled after the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, passed in 1937. The Sport Fish Restoration Act collects an excise tax on the sales of fishing gear and this has become a valuable source of funding for fisheries work.

By the late 1970s, expanded efforts by states to address fisheries problems began to outpace the availability of funds. Efforts began in 1979 to increase the program's revenues. By 1984, sufficient support was garnered to pass an amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act, sponsored by Senator Malcomb Wallop and then-Congressman John Breaux. That amendment provided for a three-fold increase in revenues under the Act in its first year, amounting to \$122 million.

This figure has continued to rise and as a result of a 1990 amendment to the Act, some of these funds can now be used for wetlands restoration, management, and enhancement programs.

bird trends, and discusses international efforts to support migratory bird conservation. The 1998-99 report is currently available.

For a listing of approved U.S. Standard Grants Program projects, contact Bettina Sparrowe at email: bettina_sparrowe@fws.gov.

For a listing of approved Canadian and Mexican projects, contact Doug Ryan at email: douglas_ryan@fws.gov.

For a listing of approved Small Grants Program projects, contact Keith Morehouse at email: keith_morehouse@fws.gov.



Historic Conservation Bill Wins By Landslide In House CARA "The Conservation & Reinvestment Act"

On May 11, 2000, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved landmark, bipartisan legislation that will increase funding for federal and state conservation, wildlife, and recreation. The "Conservation and Reinvestment Act" (CARA) - H.R. 701 - was approved by a 315 to 102 vote. The legislation is currently being considered by the U.S. Senate - S. 25 - and has majority support with 54 Senators as cosponsors. The final Senate vote is expected in August. If passed, it will then go to President Clinton, who has publicly signaled his support for CARA.

"This is truly a historic day for our nation's conservation and recreation programs," said U.S. Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), the Chairman of the House Committee on Resources who sponsored the legislation along with Reps. George Miller (D-CA), Billy Tauzin (R-LA), John Dingell (D-MI), Chris John (D-LA) and others.

"On a bipartisan basis this Congress has approved one of the most comprehensive conservation bills in decades. I'm hopeful the Senate will continue this bipartisan effort and approve this landmark legislation," said Young.

The concept behind CARA began with the Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) initiative, a national campaign to prevent species from becoming endangered by securing funds for state-level, nongame wildlife conservation, education, and recreation programs. TWW originally proposed to fund these goals by extending the federal excise tax on hunting and fishing gear to additional outdoor gear used by birders, hikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts.

After many years of building support for this funding, Congress responded to the TWW call for action by introducing legislation in October 1998 to

meet these goals though a different funding source known as the Conservation And Reinvestment Act.

Across America, conservation leaders, youth sports groups, state fish and wildlife agencies, and elected officials, including all 50 Governors and municipal leaders, have urged



If signed into law, CARA promises to be the most sweeping land conservation act in decades.



Congress to pass this bill. Over 4,700 organizations and officials are on record supporting permanent conservation funding in CARA, including the TWW coalition which has been critical to the success of this vote.

According to a statement issued by the Teaming With Wildlife National Steering Committee, "While TWW's original vision of user-fee funding for

conservation remains alive, the new proposal currently appears to offer a more viable funding option. The steering committee is committed to strengthening CARA and seeing it through Congress."

This legislation will permanently reinvest revenue from federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas production back into the conservation of our nation's natural resources. This revenue will provide the largest infusion of funds for conservation in our nation's history, totaling \$44 billion over the next 15 years. The funds will be directed mostly to state and local wildlife, parks, coastal, and other conservation programs, including \$350 million annually for state wildlife conservation efforts. In some states this will almost double the federal funds available for wildlife conservation.

"This is one of the biggest victories for wildlife in the last 100 years," stated David Waller, President of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "CARA creates a safety net for the nation's imperiled wildlife and the habitat upon which it depends." 

CARA: Proposed Annual Expenditures

H.R. 701 would reinvest \$3 billion annually in federal Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas revenue back into natural resources conservation. Here is how the dollars will be distributed:

- \$1 billion Impact Assistance and Coastal Conservation
- \$900 million Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Revitalization
- \$350 million Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Fund
- \$125 million Urban Park and Recreation Recovery
- \$100 million Historic Preservation Fund
- \$200 million Federal and Indian Lands Restoration
- \$150 million Conservation Easements & Species Recovery.
- \$200 million Payment In-Lieu of Taxes and Refuge Revenue Sharing

For more information, visit any of the following websites:

- <http://www.house.gov/resources/ocs>
- <http://www.sso.org/iafwa>
- <http://www.teaming.com>

State Voters Rally At The Polls For Parks And Water Propositions 12 and 13 Pass

Governor Davis called the passage of two initiatives “an overwhelming victory for the state’s environment.”

On March 8th, California voters approved Proposition 12, “The Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000”, (\$2.1 billion) the largest state parks bond in U.S. history. This measure will provide: (amounts are in millions of dollars)

- \$905 to local governments for parks, youth centers, and environmental enhancement projects,
- \$525 to restore and improve state parks and cultural and natural resources; and
- \$670 for coastal acquisitions, acquisition and restoration of wildlife habitat, Lake Tahoe (\$50), and farmland protection (\$25).

It has been twelve years since the last park and wildlife bond act was approved by voters. Since that time, California’s population has grown by more than five million and habitat pressures have grown proportionally.

Voters also supported Proposition 13, “The Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Protection Act” (\$1.97 billion) at the polls. The bond includes: (amounts are in millions of dollars)

- \$630 for water supply, reliability, and infrastructure projects,
- \$468 for watershed protection,
- \$355 for clean water and water recycling programs,
- \$292 for flood protection,
- \$155 for water conservation, and
- \$70 for safe drinking water.

Proposition 13 will target a variety

of projects including fish screens, dike and levee maintenance, flood control, groundwater recharge, and reduction of pesticide runoff. Californians previously passed a \$995 million water bond in 1996, for issues in the Bay-Delta region.

California’s Resources Secretary Mary Nichols applauded the broad coalition of interests that supported these bonds, acknowledging that they comprised “not only environmental groups but Chambers of Commerce, Silicon Valley manufacturers, builders, and developers.” She noted, “These are not traditionally groups that support Parks and Water Bonds, but they realized that investing in the state’s natural resources is an investment in our quality of life and our overall economy.” 

Life On Easement Street

The partners of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture (CVHJV) offer a variety of voluntary programs to protect lands for the benefit of people and wildlife. Conservation and agricultural easements offer landowners an opportunity to protect their property from development pressures and still retain ownership.

An easement gives an individual or organization a right to use, or engage in some activity on, land that is owned by someone else. A conservation easement is a tool for acquiring open space with less than full-fee purchase, whereby a public agency or private organization buys only specific rights from the landowner. For example, a conservation easement may be purchased from a willing seller for the purpose of preserving and maintaining land or water areas in a natural, scenic, or open condition for wildlife habitat

or other uses consistent with the protection of open space.

An agricultural easement may be purchased from a willing seller to ensure that the land is kept in agriculture rather than being converted to urban development. Biologists recognize that agricultural land provides a valuable buffer to urbanization. For example, a duck would rather land on a rice field than a parking lot. Both agricultural and conservation easements may be set up for a limited time period, such as fifteen or thirty years, or they may be set up in perpetuity.

Consider, for example, a farmer in the Central Valley who has a portion of land that floods regularly, damaging the crops that grow there. If this situation makes it cost-ineffective for the farmer to continue trying to grow crops on that parcel, it may be advantageous to the farmer to sell a conservation

easement to an interested agency or organization. In doing so, the farmer retains ownership of the property and, for the easement, receives a fair-market payment that may exceed the income derived from farming that parcel. In many cases, farmers who have participated in easement programs have restored wetland or upland habitat on their property and then leased to others the right to hunt waterfowl or pheasant on the property. Many landowners have established hunting programs that have provided consistent income exceeding that of their farming operation.

Conservation and agricultural easements may be acquired by charitable organizations which qualify as tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and by governmental agencies via purchase, gift, devise, grant, lease, or bequest.

see *EASEMENT*: page 11

New Joint Venture Partner Is For The Birds! Management Board Welcomes Point Reyes Bird Observatory

By: Bob Shaffer, Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Coordinator

On behalf of the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture (CVHJV) Management Board, I extend a hearty welcome to Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO), our newest partner. We are pleased to have Director Ellie Cohen represent PRBO and to have Geoff Geupel, Terrestrial Program Manager, serve as alternate Board member. The Joint Venture, a public-private partnership of 16 agencies and conservation organizations, has a long history of successful on-the-ground habitat conservation, and we look forward to the enthusiasm and scientific expertise PRBO will provide as we continue our work in the new century.

The PRBO is a non-profit, membership organization founded in 1965. Its mission is to conserve birds and the environment using science to understand and find solutions to problems threatening wildlife populations and ecosystems. PRBO brings a variety of tools and programs to the Joint Venture that will help broaden our focus to include more species of birds. These strengths are most notably in the area of monitoring and evaluation, scientific expertise, and research. For example, PRBO's Palomarin Field Station, located at the southern end of

Point Reyes National Seashore, and the Farallon Islands Field Station, 28 miles west of San Francisco's Golden Gate, are two of the premier field biology training programs in the country.

PRBO's Field Biologist Internship Program, provides interns with intensive, hands-on training in research design, data collection, management and analysis. PRBO's original research is used to develop credible assessments and to then make policy recommendations for environmental management.

Although PRBO recently joined the Management Board, it has a fairly long history of involvement with the CVHJV. Since the early 1990s, PRBO biologists have provided support, as members of the Joint Venture's Technical Committee, encouraging the development of shorebird habitat into our wetland projects. In 1991, the Joint Venture helped sponsor PRBO's Pacific Flyway Project in the Central Valley which focused on shorebird use



Long-billed dowitchers Photo: David Rosen

patterns on Valley wetlands and farmlands. These efforts led to the designation of the Grasslands Ecological Area of Merced County (160,000 acres of contiguous wetland and upland habitat) as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site.

These are exciting times for bird conservation, and the Joint Venture is poised to expand its important role. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan Update, released last year, calls for broadening partnerships, viewing conservation in a landscape approach, and ensuring that all efforts have a sound biological basis. In the spirit of the Plan update, we look forward to working with the PRBO as we protect, restore, and enhance wetland habitat for the benefit of migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species.

In the near future, the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture will begin updating its Implementation Plan. As a voting member of the Management Board, PRBO is now in a position to help shape Joint Venture policy and direction as we expand our vision, in accordance with the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

For information about the PRBO, call (415) 868-0655 or visit their website at www.prbo.org.



A Bird In The Hand Is Worth... A Trip To The Point Reyes Bird Observatory!

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory's (PRBO) Palomarin Field Station has a comprehensive environmental education program for the general public, which includes its mist-netting and bird-banding demonstrations. The biologists at PRBO's Visitor's Center host hundreds of school children,

amateur naturalists, avid bird-watchers, professional ornithologists, and other interested guests every year. This is a unique opportunity to observe an active research program and talk with the biologists as they work, as well as a special chance to see many resident and migratory birds in the hand.

The mist nets and banding lab are open on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays between Thanksgiving and May 1st, and six days a week for the rest of the year (closed Monday). The nets, which are located along a short loop trail adjoining the field station, are opened at 15 minutes after sunrise and

kept open for six hours. Every 40 minutes the nets are checked and any captured birds are gently extracted and brought to the banding lab where they are banded, measured, and released unharmed. All of these activities are open to the public, although the nets are closed, sometimes on short notice, by rain, heavy fog or strong winds.

Drop in visitors, groups of five or less, are always welcome but may wish to call (415) 868-0655 to check on current conditions. Call PRBO or check out www.prbo.org.



A visit to PRBO's Palomarin banding station gives you the opportunity to see birds in the hand, such as this young towhee.

Photo: David Rosen



EASEMENT from page 9:

The following programs are just some of the options available to Central Valley landowners interested in checking out easement opportunities:

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.: Conservation Easements for Agricultural Lands (CEAL) This agricultural conservation easement program is currently being implemented in the Sutter Basin. Its purpose is to protect agricultural land from conversion to other land uses to ensure long-term viability of agriculture, while protecting land conservation values. It encourages agricultural practices that are in harmony with the open space and scenic qualities of the property. The program, funded by both public and private sources, purchases easements from willing sellers. Contact: Olen Zirkle, Agricultural Lands and Water Specialist, (916) 852-2000.

American Farmland Trust: California Farmland Protection Program American Farmland Trust's (AFT) land protection program in California acquires agricultural conservation easements on prime farmland, threatened with conversion to urban and other non-agricultural uses. AFT works directly with landowners to complete easement transactions and provides technical assistance to land trusts and organizations that hold conservation easements. The main focus of the program is to protect irrigated farmland in the Salinas and San Joaquin Valleys; however, AFT will occasionally undertake projects outside these areas. Contact: Greg Kirkpatrick, Land Protection Representative, Visalia Field Office, (559) 627-3708.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service: Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) The Natural Resources Conservation Service works through partnerships to conserve natural resources on private land. The WRP program funds restoration practices and easement purchases to restore wetlands on crop, forest, and rangeland. Sellers compete to participate in the program. Either permanent easements or 30-year easements are available. Contact: Alan Forkey, State Wetlands Biologist, (530) 792-5653.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: National Wildlife Refuge System Acquisition Program The Fish and Wildlife Service acquires lands and interest in lands within an approved project boundary that has been identified as important habitat for the conservation of fish, wildlife, or plants. Wetland easements are among the conservation options offered to willing sellers within the project area. Contact: Karen Bierley or Steve Lay, Realty Specialists, (916) 414-6446.

CA Department of Fish and Game: Permanent Wetland Easement Program The CA Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Board, administers the State's Permanent Wetland Easement program, an effort designed to help achieve the wetland restoration and enhancement goals of the CVHJV. Although the program is aimed primarily at preserving wetland habitat, some portions of the property may be devoted to uplands or small, unharvested wildlife food plots.

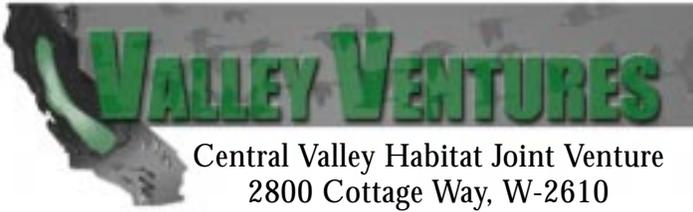
Contact: Dave Smith, CDFG Wetland Habitat Biologist, (916) 653-5284.

CA Wildlife Conservation Board: Inland Wetlands Conservation Program The Inland Wetlands Conservation Program (IWCP) works with private landowners to protect, (acquire in fee and easement), restore, and enhance critical wildlife habitat, in accordance with the objectives of the CVHJV. The program focuses on projects that make social, economic, and environmental sense. Both wetland and agricultural easements are among the conservation options available to participants. Contact Marilyn Cundiff, IWCP Manager, (916) 445-1093.

The Nature Conservancy: Easement Program The Nature Conservancy (TNC) purchases fee or easement interests from sellers on private lands, to protect rare habitats and species that may occur on those properties. TNC has several projects within the Central Valley focusing on rangeland and cropland protection. Contact: Emily Tibbott, Agency Relations Coordinator, (415) 281-0422.

U.S. Bureau of Land Management: Easement Program The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) buys, sells, and exchanges lands for the purpose of protecting rare habitats and improving public recreation. BLM has projects within the Valley that protect agricultural lands, providing habitat for the greater sandhill crane, Swainson's hawk, and the northern pintail. Contact: Rick Cooper, Cosumnes River Preserve Manager, (916) 683-1701.





Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture
2800 Cottage Way, W-2610
Sacramento, CA 95825-0509

Meet the Central Valley Habitat Joint Venture Partners

American Farmland Trust

260 Russell Blvd., Suite D
Davis, CA 95616
530 753-1073

California Waterfowl Association

4630 Northgate Blvd., #150
Sacramento, CA 95834
916 648-1406

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

3074 Gold Canal Dr.
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
916 852-2000

National Audubon Society

555 Audubon Place
Sacramento, CA 95825
916 481-5332

Point Reyes Bird Observatory

4990 Shoreline Highway
Stinson Beach, CA 94970
415 868-1221

The Nature Conservancy

1330 21st St., #103
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 449-2852

The Trust for Public Land

116 New Montgomery St., 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
415 495-5660

CA Department of Fish and Game

1416 9th St., 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 653-5284

CA Department of Water Resources

3251 S St.
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 227-7530

CA Wildlife Conservation Board

801 K St., #806
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 445-1093

US Army Corps of Engineers

1325 J St., Room 1420
Sacramento, CA 95814
916 557-6701

US Bureau of Land Management

2800 Cottage Way, W-1622
Sacramento, CA 95825
916 978-4639

US Bureau of Reclamation

2800 Cottage Way, MP152
Sacramento, CA 95825
916 978-5039

US Environmental Protection Agency

75 Hawthorne St., WTR-3
San Francisco, CA 94105
415 744-2016

US Fish and Wildlife Service

2800 Cottage Way, W-2610
Sacramento, CA 95825-0509
916 414-6459

US Natural Resources Conservation Service

430 G St., #4164
Davis, CA 95616
530 792-5656

*North American Waterfowl
Management Plan*

*Central Valley Habitat
Joint Venture*

